

PIC/D-2-58
24 September 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: Special Assistant to the DCI for
Planning and Development

SUBJECT: New Developments in the USAF 117L Program

REFERENCE: HTA/OC-173-58, dated 12 September 1958

1. Attached hereto are copies of the 117L Advisory Committee Chairman's Final Report on the Meetings held in Santa Monica on 7-10 July 1958. Included also are copies of the covering letter, Rome's comments on the Report, and a listing of General Factors Affecting RADC's R-W Work Statement.

2. Through another channel I have also learned that a concerted effort is now being made by BMD to wipe out the six-inch camera photo phase and possibly to go directly to a twenty four-inch or thirty six-inch phase. I am not sure that this is a good move either. Although we have learned much from our own experience to date, I don't believe we know exactly the nature and location of all of the remaining intelligence targets to state that a need for six-inch overall reconnaissance coverage is no longer required. Further, Eastman and Lockheed have gone so far with the six-inch system, and so much planning for more advanced systems has been predicated on the assumption that overall six-inch coverage would have been achieved that I feel even greater dislocations of 117L Program might result from such a move. I think that everyone clearly understands that far more detail will be perceived with a thirty six-inch system than with a six-inch slit camera system. I am not sure that all responsible parties at BMD and elsewhere are fully aware of the gross reductions in coverage per each thirty six-inch camera track and the resultant need for more vehicles and precision in launching operations to achieve the overall coverage required. As Chairman Goode points out starting on page 9 of the enclosure, "Throughout its discussions the committee noted a discordance among objectives of the various groups concerned with the development of the W117L System." He then lists the lack of objectives in five areas and thereby accounts for the contradictory actions which are set forth in sections III and IV starting on page 11.

3. It is obvious at least to me that the Air Force has not yet assigned an overall leader to the 117L Program who even approaches your stature in effecting the control and coordination required to give it a reasonable chance for success. At the present writing it would

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seem to me that an Air Force conclusion that the six-inch camera system should be replaced by longer focal length system might result in a compounding of the mismatchings mentioned in Goode's report. I think that a six-inch camera with point perspective rather than a slit system could result in a better intelligence product, but operational factors, and not Eastman Kodak's capability, would appear to have dictated this choice.

4. From my referenced memorandum to you dated 12 September 1958, it would seem painfully clear that something is preventing the USAF 117L Requirements Committee Chairman, Col. H. Macia USAF, from getting together with the USAF 117L Advisory Committee Chairman, Dr. H. Goode. I am convinced that this meeting and many more between the Committees must come about if the 117L Program is going to have a reasonable chance of clarifying and consolidating its objectives. I have no desire to get involved in the internal affairs of the USAF via the 117L Program, but I feel that it is my responsibility to report these observations to you. On the basis of cost alone anything that can be done to make the 117L Program succeed or increase its efficiency seems to be highly in order. Any suggestions or recommendations from you in this matter would be most appreciated.

ARTHUR C. LUNDAHL
Director,
Photographic Intelligence Center

2 Attach.

cc: DD/I
J.Q. Reber